



10 Steps to Greater Influence

The Book of Joshua

The first five chapters of Joshua give at many important principles for effective leadership. These chapters also provide insight on how to move from minor leadership to major leadership. Here are ten important insights from Joshua's preparation for greater influence.

1. Spiritual leaders do not live in the past. *"Moses My servant is dead"* (Joshua 1:2). Our world is changing rapidly. This new day in ministry requires new methods. Read God's Word, it never changes, but our methods should change and adapt to the realities of our time and culture. Leaders do not live in the past. They act in the present and their vision sees into the future.
2. Walk out your spiritual inheritance. *"Every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon I have given you"* (Joshua 1:3). Every Christian has a "realm" of influence for Jesus Christ. Your area of potential impact may be much larger than you realize. That is why you should daily pray, as Jabez prayed, that God would increase your influence. (1 Chronicles 4:10.)

Do not settle on a small corner of your spiritual inheritance. Explore the very limits of the influence God has given you. This will require that you walk by faith into new territory spiritually.

3. Be bold in the face of opposition. *"No man shall be able to stand before you all the days of your life"* (Joshua 1:5). This does not mean that we are unkind to our critics or that we do not learn from them. But we must not receive criticism that is intended to hurt or destroy. (Read Isaiah 54:17.)

As a leader you should expect opposition. True leaders attract opposition because they move people beyond what they have known and what is comfortable. You can be bold when people oppose you, knowing that God has given you the victory.

4. Be assured of God's presence. *"As I was with Moses, so I will be with you. I will not leave you nor forsake you"* (Joshua 1:5). No matter where you are, no matter what you do, God is with you! You can live confidently because you know God is with you and He is for you. Claim the promise of God's presence. Jesus is Emmanuel, God is with us. He will never leave you! (Hebrews 13:5.)
5. Always act with courage. *"Be strong and very courageous."* (Joshua 1:6,7,9). Bill Bright often said, "You cannot be a leader and a coward." Leadership requires courage. As a leader you will make difficult decisions. Some of your decisions will be unpopular. In the midst of conflict and challenges, you can always exhibit courage, *"for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go"* (Joshua 1:9).
6. Obey God's Word. *"This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success"* (Joshua 1:8). God's formula for success is:
 1. Confess His Word with your mouth. (Mark 11:22-24.)
 2. Meditate on God's Word in your heart. (Psalm 119:97.)
 3. Obey God's Word with your life. (Psalm 119:97-100.)
7. Take a big step of faith. Joshua went from minor to major leadership in a single day. (Joshua 3:7; 4:14.) The day he took charge and modeled courage for the people to get beyond what had always blocked them from their inheritance – *"on that day the Lord exalted Joshua in the sight of all Israel"* (Joshua 4:14). Joshua could put his foot in the water, but only God could part the water. Take a step of faith; do what you can do. Then trust God to do what only He can do.

The river represents what separates us from God's promises to you and your inheritance. What "Jordan" seems impossible to you? Take a big step of faith and God will display His miracle power for you.

8. Let your life be marked by God. *"Then the Lord said to Joshua, 'This day I have rolled away the reproach of Egypt from you'"* (Joshua 5:9). Under the Old Covenant physical circumcision was the sign that a man was in covenant with God. In the New Covenant, we can experience a spiritual "circumcision of heart." (Colossians 2:11-12.)

The Holy Spirit wants to cut away anything that would disqualify us from God-honoring spiritual leadership. God wants to mark our lives in such a profound way that we will never be mistaken for a person who is not in a covenant relationship with Him. Allow the Holy Spirit to mark you as a covenant person. This spiritual surgery may be painful, but it is necessary before we can truly represent the Lord on the fields of spiritual conflict. (Joshua 5:1-9.)

9. **Think and believe in terms of abundance.** *"Then the manna ceased on the day after they had eaten the produce of the land"* (Joshua 5:12). The manna God daily provided for His children was just enough. Once it was eaten, there was nothing left. Yet God had promised that Abraham's offspring would bless all nations. (Genesis 12:1-3.) They did not have resources to bless others as long as they were dependent on manna. In the same way, God brings His leaders to a point when the "manna" stops. He does not do this to harm us. He is moving us from "just enough" to abundance. Now we have a surplus so we may be a blessing to others! God wants you to be more than just a consumer.

He wants you to be a producer in His kingdom and fulfill your covenant destiny to bless the nations! As a leader, provision will no longer just "drop out of heaven." Now you will work with God in receiving provision, even if it means picking fruit in enemy territory! As a leader in covenant with God, we are blessed in order to bless others, even blessing all the peoples of the earth.

10. **Have a new encounter with the Commander.** *"And Joshua fell on his face to the earth and worshiped, and said to Him, 'What does my Lord say to His servant?'"* (Joshua 5:14). Before we go to claim our spiritual inheritance, we need a fresh experience with our Commander, the Lord Jesus Christ. In God's army there is only one commander.

We are to be leaders of people, but we are followers of our Lord. (1 Peter 2:21.) We follow in His footsteps and we are under His absolute authority. Joshua took off his shoes as a sign of reverence, in obedience and honor to his Commander. (Joshua 5:15.) May obedience to your Commander, the Lord Jesus Christ, mark your life, as well.

Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go (Joshua 1:9).

Conclusion

God's plan for us as leaders is one of constant growth, maturity and influence. As we follow the life of Joshua and implement these leadership principles, we will give the Lord opportunity to promote us from minor leadership to major leadership, a place of great influence!